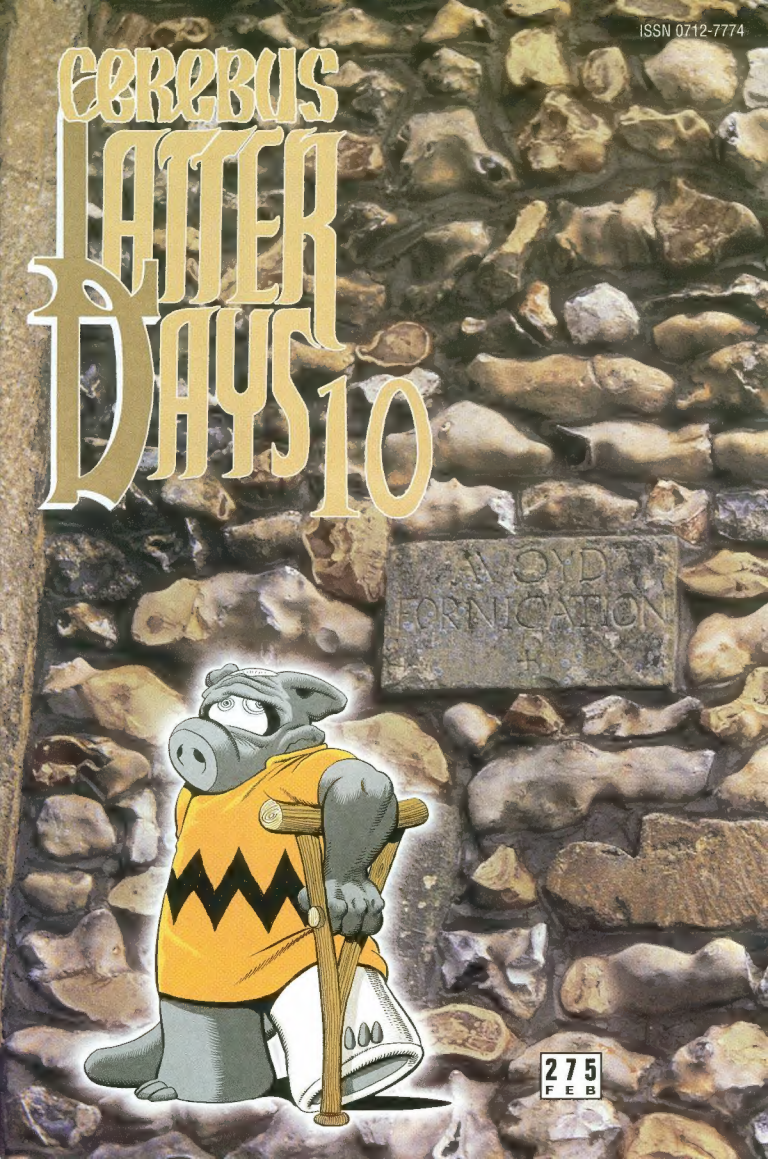
ISSN 0712-7774

CEREBUS LATTER DAYS 10



275
FEB

correspondence

AARDVARK COMMENT

As I said last issue, I'm hard at work on the "Islam, My Islam" series of essays (it's looking like a three-parter) so I'm badly in need of a quick filler for the back of this issue to free up some time. So (you guessed it), it's "Aardvark Comment" time:

Mike Gold Media Services
304 Main Avenue, Suite 194
Norwalk, Connecticut, 06851-6167

Dear Dave:

Your Gene Day memoir touched me; it was a truly fine thing to do for a friend and mentor. The fact that your feelings are so strong 19 years almost to the day after his death—well, that says a lot about both you and Gene.

Not to belabor the point, but the award you have named after Gene is a class act.

Nice going, Dave.

Best -
Mike Gold

Mike Gold worked just about everywhere in the comic-book field in the 1980's and is currently involved in a number of charities in New England, as well as running his own "Mike Gold Media Services" (mikegold@aol.com). At least I assume *it's his own. If it isn't he must have a great boss who let him rename the joint for himself.*

Nice to hear from you, Mike, but: "feelings"? Nonono. What I owe Gene Day and the relationship that I have with his memory exists on a much loftier plateau than "feelings". Trust me.

****

134-2107 Danforth Ave.
Toronto, ON M4C 1K1

Dear Mr. Sim:

I've been reading Cerebus since I bought issue #34. One day, I was in Harry Kremer's shop (across the street from where it is now), and I'd just bought all the new Marvels (on the right), all the new DC (on the left), and, knowing that I'd soon be bored, asked him "Got anything else?" Harry turns around, takes down #34 from the rack— front & center (which I had overlooked week after week), and asks "seen this?" I bought it, and, although I appreciate your efforts to put out a monthly on schedule, I was not able to keep up. Instead, I've bought and read each trade paperback.

I've just finished *Form & Void* (Penis & Vagina), and I can't disagree with your comments on women, there and in the earlier series (*Women* t.pb.). I find it affects me in the business world when job hunting, as human resource officers are predominantly female, and they've designed hiring processes which result in women being hired. I'm quite happy now, being self-employed.

(continued in the back...)

CEREBUS
NO. 275 FEBRUARY 2002

DAVE SIM
Creator, Writer
Characters/
pencil & ink,
mechanical tones,
lettering

GERHARD
Background
Artist/pencil & ink

CHRIS VERHOEVEN
Cover Technician

KEN SIM
Cover Photo

LATTER DAYS
•
PROLOGUE
(Cerebus 266
and 267)
•
BOOK ONE
(Cerebus 268 to
288)
•
BOOK TWO
(Cerebus 289 to
300)

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?
CERBERUS THOUGHT YOU SAID THAT HIS NAME WAS "McSPAHN"
AYE (AY'H HOOP WUNKED NESS)
THEN WHY DOES IT SAY "McGWIRE" ON THE BACK OF HIS SHIRT?
DAT DERE IS A LOOOONG STORY (YOUAH-OUTTA-DA-LOOP NIEGS) CONSOYNING TODD "FAIR LANE" McSPAHN AN' ANNUTDAH FELLA'S BALLS.
ALL RIGHT.
FORGET CERBERUS ASKED.
"CORPSES IN TWO BIG PILES."
CHECK.
"BUILD A PARK."
CHECK.
'FIGYUH-8 PONY RIDE AROUN' DA TWO PILES."
CHECK.
ANY'ING ELTZ, YOOAH TODDNESS?
DAT'S OLE FUH RIGHT. NOW, "FERRY TITZ" JERROLD.

"YOUR EASILY CIRCUMVENTEDNESS"? OFF TO A **LOUSY** START, CERBBUS THOUGHT (BALANCED ON HIS RIGHT FOOT). CERBBUS **SHOULD** HAVE TOLD MCGRUIN TO &GUFF &GUFF &GUFF AWAY **BACKWARDS**. ON HIS **KNEES**. **AND** ON **HIS FAT, STUPID NOSE.**

(CLEARLY, CERBBUS NEEDED TO "BLOW UP" ON HIS FOUL-TEMPERED TYRANT BALLS.) (WELL, YOU KNOW WHAT THEY SAY: "PRACTICE, PRACTICE, PRACTICE")

ACTUALLY, CERBBUS COULD JUST AS EASILY HAVE **HOPPED** AROUND -- BUT HE HAD TO GET THE THREE WISE FELLOWS "BACK INTO LINE" ("HAY HOOPWINKERNESS"? # "YOUR OUT-OF-THE-LOOPNESS"? #!) SO CERBBUS JUST STOOD THERE LOOKING **REALLY STEAMED** WHILE HE LISTENED TO MOSHIE &HPFFT&HPFFT&HPFFT&HPFFT A **CRUTCH** OUT OF A COUPLE OF STRAY BOARDS...

(WHICH GAVE CERBBUS TIME TO DREAM UP HIS **NEXT** UNBEARABLE PENANCE)

"**CLOTHING HUT!**" (CERBBUS SNARLED)

(AS SOON AS HE HAD HIS HAND-CRAFTED CRUTCH TUCKED INTO HIS LEFT ARMPIT) THE TOUGH PART **THEN** WAS TRYING NOT TO **LAUGH** AS HE LISTENED TO

MOSHIE, LOSHIE AND KOSHIE (**WOOP! WOOP! WOOP!** WOAH!) MADLY SCRAMBLING AROUND (**HEY! YOW!** WHAT TH'?) RIPPING SHIRTS AND SWEATERS OFF GUYS' BACKS AND (&HP &THSHNPSTCHNP) CUTTING THEM DOWN TO SIZE... OVER-TURNING (**KA-WHUMP**) THE TWO-WHEELED WAGON AND (**KATHUNK KATHUNK KATHUNK**) PROPPING IT UP ON PLIES OF ROCKS AND THEN USING (**KATHUNK KATHUNK KATHUNK**) **OTHER** ROCKS TO DISPLAY "DA MOYCHENDYCE"....

AS SOON AS CERBERUS **SAW** THE SHIRT HE **KNEW** IT WAS "THE ONE". JUST **LOOK** AT IT! THE **ENTIRE** SHIRT CONSISTING OF TWO ROWS OF **JAGGED, YELLOW TEETH** OPENING UP. READY TO DEVOUR **ANY** CERBERITE WHO **DOUBTED** CERBERUS WAS IN CHARGE.

(SPEAKING OF "IN CHARGE")

"**HEADQUARTERS!**" (CERBERUS SNARLED)

SPECIFYING THAT IT DIDN'T NEED TO BE **ANYTHING FANCY** - JUST SO LONG AS IT WAS **BIGGER, MORE COMFORTABLE** AND IN A **BETTER LOCATION** THAN ANYONE **ELSE'S** HEADQUARTERS.

"SAAAY! **PAT** SOUNDS LIKE **TODD** "FAR LANE" **MCSPAWN**'S FARM-HOUSE", SAID LOSHIE.

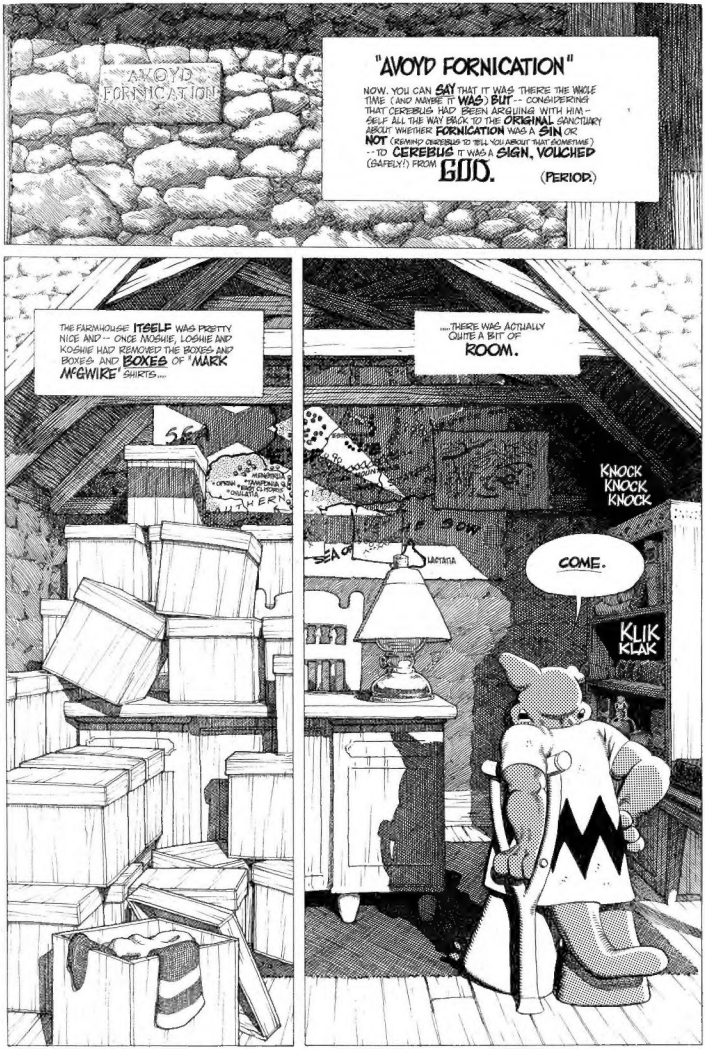
"IT **DOES**," DOESN'T IT?" ANSWERED KOSHIE, ADDING: "NYUK, NYUK, NYUK."

THE BOYS RACED OFF UP AHEAD -- AND CERBERUS FOLLOWING ON HIS CRUTCH AND PASSING A BUNCH OF TIRED-LOOKING **OLD** GUYS IN THEIR DOUBLE-M "MARK MCGWIRE" SHIRTS. (KOSHIE HAD STARTED TO EXPLAIN, AT ONE POINT, THAT **THAT** WAS THE **OTHER FELLA** WIT' DA **BALLS**" AND THAT **THAT** WAS WHAT THE DOUBLE-M STOOD FOR. WHEN CERBERUS REMINDED KOSHIE THAT CERBERUS REALLY DIDN'T WANT TO HEAR **ANY** MORE ABOUT IT, CERBERUS TOOK IT AS A GOOD SIGN THAT THAT **WAS**, INDEED, THE **LAST** THAT CERBERUS HEARD ABOUT IT.)

CERBERUS FOLLOWING ON HIS CRUTCH **LOST** SIGHT OF KOSHIE AND LOSHIE AND MOSHIE SO HE JUST KEPT FOLLOWING THE TRAIL OF TIRED-LOOKING **OLD** GUYS UNTIL HE CAME TO THIS BIG OL' STONE-AND-TIMBER **FARM HOUSE** AND CERBERUS REMEMBERED HOW **RABBI** -- AT THE START OF **HIS** GREATEST ADVENTURES -- ALWAYS ASKED **GOD** TO VOUCHSAFE HIM A **SIGN**. SO **CERBERUS** (NOT REALLY **EXPECTING** ANYTHING BUT FIGURING THAT IT WAS WORTH) (YOU KNOW) (A **SHOT**)

THOUGHT "**GOD**, PLEASE **VOUCHETH** (SAFELY) UNTO **CERBERUS** A **SIGN** SUCH AS THOU DIDST **VOUCHETH** (SAFELY) UNTO **RABBI**. AMEN."

WELL, CERBERUS **KNOWS** YOU AREN'T GOING TO **BELIEVE** THIS BUT **JUST** AS CERBERUS **REACHED** THE STONE-AND-TIMBER FARMHOUSE, CERBERUS HEARD THIS **TAP-TAP-TAP** NOISE OVER HIS HEAD. SO CERBERUS LOOKED UP -- AND THERE IT WAS!


AVOYD FORNICATION
"AVOYD FORNICATION"
NOW, YOU CAN SAY THAT IT WAS THERE THE WHOLE TIME (AND MAYBE IT WAS) BUT -- CONSIDERING THAT CEREBELLUS HAD BEEN ARGUING WITH HIMSELF ALL THE WAY BACK TO THE ORIGINAL SANCTUARY ABOUT WHETHER FORNICATION WAS A SIN OR NOT (REMIND CEREBELLUS TO TELL YOU ABOUT THAT SOMETIME) -- TO CEREBELLUS IT WAS A SIGN, VOUCHED (GAFFELY!) FROM GOD. (PERIOD.)
THE FARMHOUSE ITSELF WAS PRETTY NICE AND -- ONCE MOSHIE, LOSHIE AND KOSHIE HAD REMOVED THE BOXES AND BOXES AND BOXES OF 'MARK MCGWIRE' SHIRTS....
....THERE WAS ACTUALLY QUITE A BIT OF ROOM.
KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK
COME.
KLIK KLAK

?
WHO THE HELL ARE YOU?
"FERRY TITZ" JERROLD, THY CEREBELUENESS
HA HA HA HA HA HA
"FAIRY TITS?
NONONO "FERRY TITZ":
"FOAH LIKE AS DA FERRY CONVEYER" FRUM DOCK UNTO DESTINATION SO - BY DA WILL O' GOD-- MAY DA "SEAT O' TROOT AN' DA SANCTOOARY BE CARRIED FORWARD UNTO VICT'RY BOT WIT' IN AN' WIT' OUT MOY BOSOM."
AMEN.
OH! ER. UHHH...?
AMEN.
HEH HEH HEH. NOW FOYMIT ME TO RELIEF YOUSE FROM DA INTROOSIV-OSITY...
...OF HIS TODDNESS'S BOOKS AN MAPS O' MILITARY STRAGEDY.
?
OH NO NO NO THEY'RE FINE...
WAK
RIGHT.
WHERE THEY ARE.
I WOULD LIKE TO ACCOMODATE YOUSE, YOOHA CEREBELUENESS
BUT HIS TODDNESS EXTINCTLY SPECIFIED...

WHAT MEANEST ALL THESE...
...COLOURED...
...PING.
"F.T.J." ?
EXTINCTLY SPECI-...
...FRIED...
THAT ONE WORKED LIKE A WELL-OILED PROVERB: "GHEAST THOU UNTO A YUTZ A LESS YUTZY NICKNAME? AND UNTO THEE WILL HE LEAK--LIKE A SIEVE IN SPRINGTIME."
SERIOUSLY.
THE MAN WAS A WALKING "COLOURED PIN ENCYCLOPEDIA".
WHICH COLOURED PINS HAD COLOURED PIN BALLS THE SIZE OF YOUR HEAD. (THE YELLOW ONES)...
WHICH COLOURED PINS WERE YELLOW CLEAR THROUGH. (THE BLUE ONES)...
WHICH COLOURED PINS WERE COLOURED PIN TOAST. (THE WHITE ONES)...
WHICH COLOURED PINS WERE GOING TO MARKET.
WHICH COLOURED PINS WERE STAYING HOME.
WHICH COLOURED PINS WERE HAVING ROAST BEEF.
WHICH COLOURED PINS WERE HAVING NONE AND
WHICH COLOURED PINS WERE CRYING "WEE WEE WEE" ALL THE.... uh....
WELL...
YOU GET THE IDEA.
IT ALL CAME POURING OUT OF "FAIRY T." ER "F.T.J." LIKE YOU-KNOW-WHAT FROM A GOOSE RAISED ON OAT BRAN.

THE **GOOD NEWS** WAS THAT IT WAS GOING TO BE A COLOURED-PIN **WALKOVER.** ANY MINUTE NOW, THE **CIRINIST** COLOURED PINS WERE GOING TO LAUNCH A **COLOURED-PIN COUNTER-STRIKE** AND -- IN THE PROCESS -- GET THEIR POINTY LITTLE COLOURED PIN **BLITTS** KICKED **CLEAR** ACROSS THE **KOTA MOUNTAINS** OR INTO THE **SOFIM RIVER CANYONS** (AS THE CASE MAY BE.)

THE **BAD NEWS** WAS THAT THAT MEANT CEREBUS HAD PRACTICALLY **NO** TIME AT ALL TO MAKE SURE EVERYONE KNEW **HE** WAS IN CHARGE (BECAUSE OTHERWISE **EVERYONE** WAS GOING TO GIVE **M'SPAHN** ALL THE **CREDIT** FOR WHAT **CEREBUS' COLOURED PINS** WERE ABOUT TO **DO.**)

SO CEREBUS STARTED READING SOME OF M'SPAHN'S BOOKS, WHICH TURNED OUT TO BE **ALMOST** A COMPLETE WASTE OF TIME (SINCE NOT **ONE** OF THE BOOKS HAD A **WORD** ABOUT **COLOURED PINS**) (AND CEREBUS HAD CHECKED UNDER "C" IN EVERY DAMNED INDEX) **EXCEPT** FOR THIS **ONE** BOOK WHICH WAS FULL OF **QUOTES** ABOUT WAR FROM GREAT LEADERS IN NICE, BIG LETTERS (THAT IS, THE **QUOTES** WERE WRITTEN IN NICE, BIG LETTERS. THE GREAT LEADERS WERE -- YOU KNOW -- **DEAD**)

MOST OF THE QUOTES WERE **WAY** TOO LONG (SOMETIMES, LIKE, A WHOLE **PAGE**) BUT SOME OF THEM WERE **GOOD... AND SHORT ENOUGH** TO WRITE DOWN (WHICH IS WHAT CEREBUS DID, LIKE THIS ONE:)

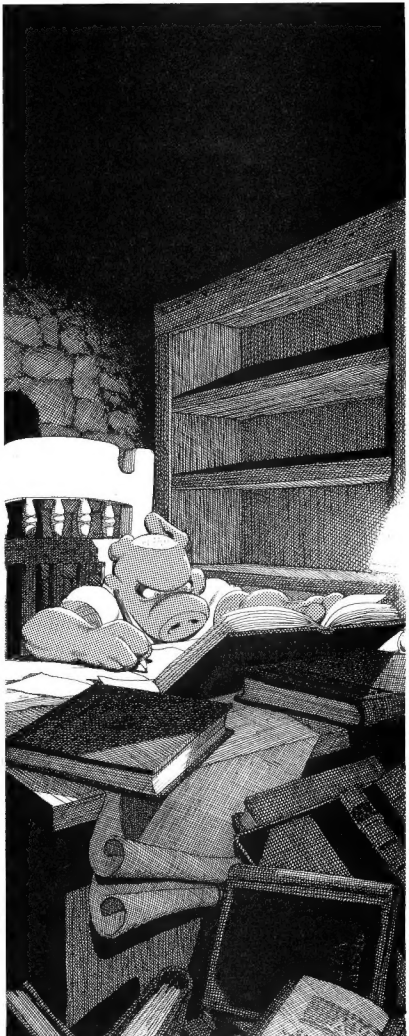
"A MAN CAN DIE BUT **ONCE**. WE OWE **GOD** A DEATH."

AND **THIS** ONE:

"IS **LIFE** SO **DEAR** OR **PEACE** SO **SWEET** AS TO BE PURCHASED AT THE PRICE OF **CHAINS** AND **SLAVERY**? **FORBID IT,** ALMIGHTY **GOD!** I KNOW **NOT** WHAT COURSE **OTHERS** MAY TAKE, BUT AS FOR **ME** -- **GIVE ME LIBERTY** OR **GIVE ME DEATH!**"

AND **THIS** ONE:

"THE ART OF WAR IS SIMPLE ENOUGH. FIND OUT WHERE YOUR ENEMY IS. GET AT HIM AS SOON AS YOU CAN. STRIKE AT HIM AS HARD AS YOU CAN AND AS OFTEN AS YOU CAN AND KEEP MOVING ON."



AND **THIS** ONE:

"**WAR ALONE** BRINGS UP TO ITS **HIGHEST TENSION** ALL HUMAN ENERGY AND PUTS THE STAMP OF **NOBILITY** UPON THE PEOPLES WHO HAVE THE **COURAGE** TO FACE IT."

AND **THIS** ONE:

"**THIS WAR** IS ONE OF THOSE **ELEMENTAL CONFLICTS** WHICH USHER IN A NEW MILLENIUM AND WHICH **SHAKE THE WORLD ONCE** IN A **THOUSAND YEARS!**"

AND **THIS** ONE:

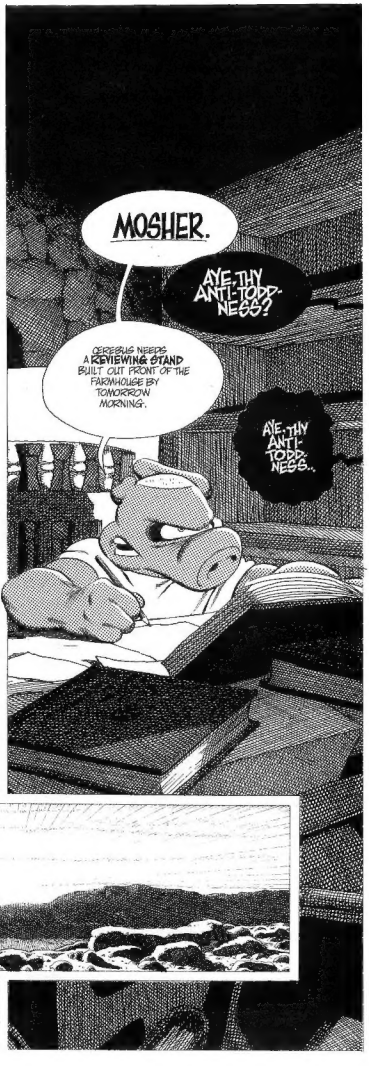
"AND WHEN THE WAR BROKE OUT, ITS **REAL HORRORS**, ITS **REAL DANGERS**, ITS **MENACE** OF **REAL DEATH** WERE A **BLESSING** COMPARED WITH THE **INHUMAN REIGN** OF THE **LIE**."

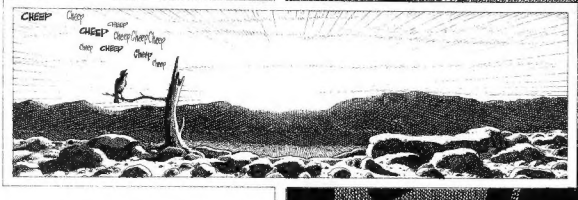
AND:

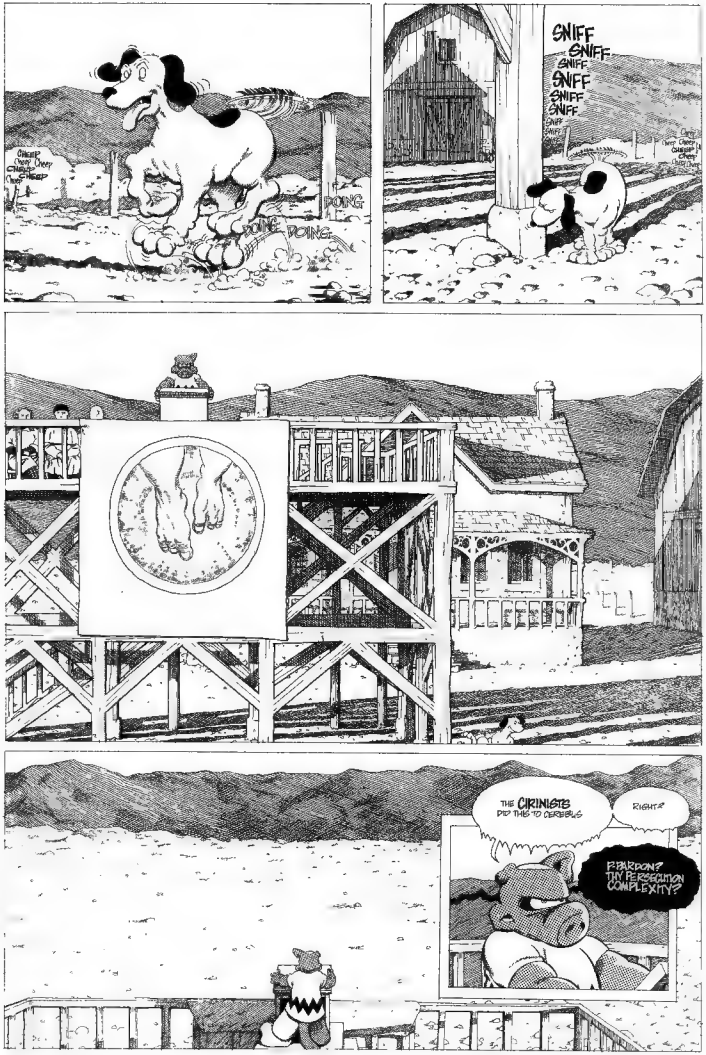
"**HIGH COMMAND IN WAR** IS NO PLACE FOR THOSE WHO NEED **CONSENSUS**."

THAT LAST ONE WAS THE ONE THAT CONVINCED CERBERUS TO STRING THEM ALL TOGETHER INTO A **SPEECH** (THAT WOULD SHOW ALL THE GOOD AND FAITHFUL CEREBITES WHO WAS IN CHARGE) (SO THEY DIDN'T ACCIDENTALLY TURN INTO A BUNCH OF EVIL AND DISLOYAL TOOTH-MASHERS) BECAUSE **IT** SAID WHAT **CERBERUS** WANTED TO SAY (WHICH WAS "FUCK MISPATHY, FOLLOW CERBERUS.") (PARDON CERBERUS' BEFUDDLESS)... **BLITZ**... IT MADE IT SOUND **MORE IMPORTANT** AND (YOU KNOW) **NOBLE** AND STUFF

WHICH IS **REALLY** WHAT LEADERSHIP IS ALL ABOUT: FINDING REALLY **GOOD, NOBLE-SOUNDING** WAYS TO TELL PEOPLE WHAT YOU WANT THEM TO **DO**, BECAUSE IF YOU WERE TO JUST **TELL** THEM WHAT WHAT YOU WANT THEM TO DO, THEY WOULD JUST LOOK AT YOU AS IF YOU WERE **NUTS** AND TELL YOU TO GO FUCK YOURSELF! (PARDON CERBERUS' BEFUDDLESS, AGAIN.)

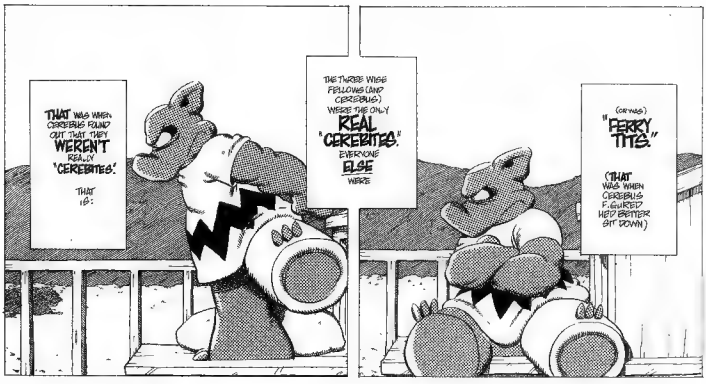

MOSHER.
AYE, THY ANTI-TODD-NESS?
CERBERUS NEEDS A REVIEWING STAND BUILT OUT FRONT OF THE FARMHOUSE BY TOMORROW MORNING.
AYE, THY ANTI-TODD-NESS...

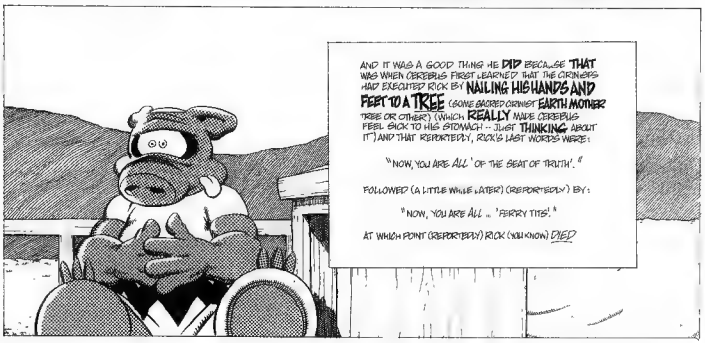


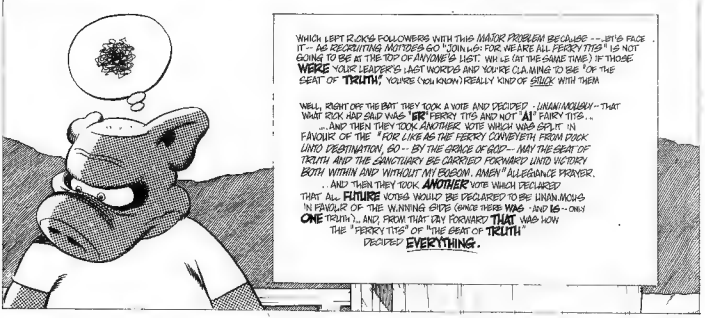

CHEEP CHEEP CHEEP CHEEP CHEEP
BOING
BOING
BOING
SNIFF
SNIFF
SNIFF
SNIFF
SNIFF
SNIFF
SNIFF
CHEEP CHEEP CHEEP CHEEP CHEEP
THE CIRINISTE DID THIS TO DERBELS
RIGHT?
PARADOX? TINY PERSECUTION COMPLEXITY?

THE CIRINISTS! THEY MUST'VE LAUNCHED THEIR COUNTER-STRIKE THIS MORNING JUST
TO MAKE EVERBODY MISS CEREBUS' GREAT SPEECH, RIGHT?
ER- NOT EXACTLY (YOOAH, SELF REGORPTION)
WELL..THEN...WHERE (EXACTLY)...DID EVERYONE GO?!
THEY WENT TO A (YOOAH) (HOPEFULLY) (HARDY O' HEARTEEN-NESS)
"THEY. WENT. TO. A."
WHAT?

A.
WEENIE!
ROAST?
4 UH WEENIES
PLEASE, YOZHA SPAWNTRAIN-EOUSLY COMBRILISTIVE-NESS!...
YOUSE HAFTA UNDUH-STAYND.
DA BOYS LOVES DEESE WEENIES!
AN DERE MAHSHMALLOWS
DOAN' FORGIT McSPAHN PROMISED DEM
KICK
OW
McSPAHN?
YOU MEAN THEY'D RATHER GO TO A McSPAHN WEENIE ROAST...THAN LISTEN TO A SPEECH BY "HE" WHOSE WISDOM AND UNDERSTANDING SURPASSETH ALL"?
DEY UH
DEY REALLY LOVES DEESE WEENIES YOZHA
WHAT SORT OF LOUSY-ASS CEREBITES ARE THESE GUYS?
BOING
DOING
DOING


THAT was when CERBERUS found out that they WEREN'T REALLY 'CERBERITES'.
That is:
THE THREE WISE FELLOWS (AND CERBERUS) WERE THE ONLY REAL 'CERBERITES.' EVERYONE ELSE WERE
(OR WAS) "FERRY TITS."
(THAT WAS WHEN CERBERUS FIGURED HE'D BETTER SIT DOWN)


AND IT WAS A GOOD THING HE DID BECAUSE THAT WAS WHEN CERBERUS FIRST LEARNED THAT THE CRIMPERS HAD EXECUTED RICK BY NAILING HIS HANDS AND FEET TO A TREE (GONE SACRED CRIMPER EARTH MOTHER TREE OR OTHER) (WHICH REALLY MADE CERBERUS FEEL SICK TO HIS STOMACH -- JUST THINKING ABOUT IT) AND THAT REPORTEDLY, RICK'S LAST WORDS WERE:
"NOW, YOU ARE ALL OF THE SEAT OF TRUTH!"
FOLLOWED (A LITTLE WHILE LATER) (REPORTEDLY) BY:
"NOW, YOU ARE ALL ... 'FERRY TITS!'"
AT WHICH POINT (REPORTEDLY) RICK (YOU KNOW) DIED


WHICH LEFT RICK'S FOLLOWERS WITH THIS MAJOR PROBLEM BECAUSE -- ...IT'S FACE IT -- AS RECRUITING MOTTOES GO "JOIN US FOR WE ARE ALL FERRY TITS" IS NOT GOING TO BE AT THE TOP OF ANYONE'S LIST. WHILE (AT THE SAME TIME) IF THOSE WERE YOUR LEADER'S LAST WORDS AND YOU'RE CLAIMING TO BE "OF THE SEAT OF TRUTH," YOU'RE (YOU KNOW) REALLY KIND OF STUCK WITH THEM
WELL, RIGHT OFF THE BAT THEY TOOK A VOTE AND DECIDED -- UNANIMOUSLY -- THAT WHAT RICK HAD SAID WAS "ER" FERRY TITS AND NOT "AL" FAIRY TITS ...
... AND THEN THEY TOOK ANOTHER VOTE WHICH WAS SPLIT IN FAVOUR OF THE "FOR LIKE AS THE FERRY CONVEYETH FROM DOCK UNTO DESTINATION, SO -- BY THE GRACE OF GOD -- MAY THE SEAT OF TRUTH AND THE SANCTUARY BE CARRIED FORWARD UNTO VICTORY BOTH WITHIN AND WITHOUT MY BOSOM. AMEN" ALLEGIANCE PROMISE.
... AND THEN THEY TOOK ANOTHER VOTE WHICH DECLARED THAT ALL FUTURE VOTES WOULD BE DECLARED TO BE UNANIMOUS IN FAVOUR OF THE WINNING SIDE (SINCE THERE WAS -AND IS- ONLY ONE TRUTH) ... AND, FROM THAT DAY FORWARD THAT WAS HOW THE "FERRY TITS" OF THE SEAT OF TRUTH" DECIDED EVERYTHING.

SEE? SO THAT WAS WHAT HAD HAPPENED WITH CERBERUS! **WORD OF TRUTH:** KOSHIE ..OSHIE AND MOSHIE HAD **RELAYED** THE WORD OF TRUTH **TO** THE "FERRY TITS" AND A **MAJORITY** OF THE "FERRY TITS" HAD VOTED IN FAVOUR OF IT **BEING** THE WORD OF TRUTH

LIKEWISE, WHEN TODD "EAR LANE" MCSPAWN HAD TOLD THE "FERRY TITS" THAT THEY NEEDED TO BREAK THROUGH THE CHRIST FRONTLINE TO THE SOUTH:

THE "FERRY TITS" VOTED ON IT AND THE MAJORITY AGREED WITH MCSPAWN (SO THAT WAS WHAT THEY DID)

AND **THEN** THE MAJORITY OF THE "FERRY TITS" VOTED MCSPAWN TO BE RICK'S OFFICIAL SUCCESSOR .... (SO THAT MCSPAWN WAS OF THE SEAT OF TRUTH AND THE SEAT OF TRUTH WAS OF MCSPAWN.) **THE SEAT OF TRUTH** (I.E. MCSPAWN) (ACCORDING TO THE "FERRY TITS" INTERPRETATION OF THE ALLEGIANCE PROMISE) WAS TO BE "CARRIED FORWARD UNTO VICTORY" **WITHIN** THEIR "FERRY TIT" BOSOMS AND THE **SANCTUARY** (I.E. CERBERUS) WAS TO BE "CARRIED FORWARD UNTO VICTORY" **WITHOUT** THEIR "FERRY TIT" BOSOMS

AT THAT POINT, (HAVING DECIDED THEY WERE ALL NO-GOOD "FERRY TIT" TRAITORS) KOSHIE, MOSHIE AND ..OSHIE HAD SWORN THE **NORTH-EASTERN** HUNTING LODGE "FERRY TITS" TO AN OATH OF LOYALTY TO CERBERUS. **BUT,** (AS IT TURNED OUT) AS SOON AS THEY LEFT TO COME BACK TO THE **SANCTUARY** MCSPAWN HAD CALLED FOR **ANOTHER** OATH OF LOYALTY VOTE WHICH THE NORTH EASTERN HUNTING LODGE "FERRY TITS" (OF COURSE!) **LOST** WHICH MEANT THAT (AS LAW ABIDING "FERRY TITS") THEY HAD TO **INSTANTLY** SWITCH TO THE WINNING SIDE (LOYALTY TO MCSPAWN)

SEE? SO THE SAME THING HAD HAPPENED WHEN KOSHIE, OSHIE AND MOSHIE HAD ANNOUNCED THAT CERBERUS WAS GIVING A SPEECH.. MCSPAWN ANNOUNCED THAT **HE** WAS HAVING A WEENIE ROAST. THE "FERRY TITS" TOOK A VOTE. MORE "FERRY TITS" VOTED TO GO TO THE WEENIE ROAST THAN VOTED TO HEAR CERBERUS' SPEECH, SO (BY "FERRY TIT" LAW) THEY **ALL HAD TO GO TO THE WEENIE ROAST.!**

IT WAS AT **THAT** POINT IN THE EXPLANATION THAT CERBERUS NOTICED **THREE** THINGS - CERBERUS NOTICED (A) THAT KOSHIE, ..OSHIE AND MOSHIE HAD STOPPED TALKING (B) THAT CERBERUS WAS STARTING TO GET A **REALLY BAD** HEADACHE AND (C) THAT CERBERUS HAD BEEN (UNCONSCIOUSLY) PUNCH HIS HIMSELF IN THE SIDE OF THE HEAD THROUGH MOST OF KOSHIE, OSHIE AND MOSHIE'S EXPLANATION

REALIZING THAT (C) WAS (PROBABLY) THE LEADING CAUSE OF (B) AND (POSSIBLY) (A) AS WELL, CERBERUS **STOPPED** PUNCHING HIM SELF IN THE HEAD.

BAF.

PUNCH.

BAP.

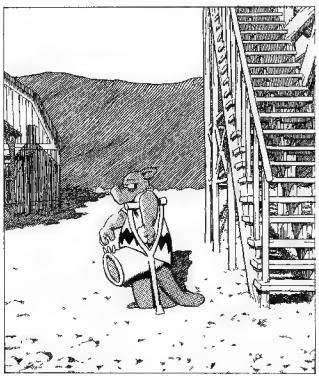
BIFF.

BAFF.

AT WHICH POINT CERBERUS' HEAD-ACHE STARTED GOING AWAY.

AT WHICH POINT (PROBABLY TO MAKE CERBERUS **FEEL** BETTER) KOSHIE TOLD HIM THAT THE "FERRY TITS" HAD VOTED (JUST BEFORE THEY LEFT FOR THE WEENIE ROAST) TO CALL EACH OTHER **"FT."** (YOUR INITIAL HERE) **"** (AS IN **"FT.J."** INSTEAD OF **"FERKY TITS" JERROLD")**

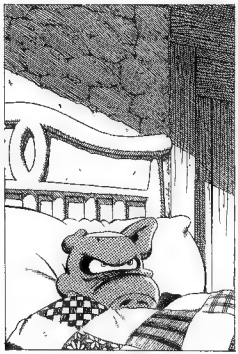
AT WHICH POINT...

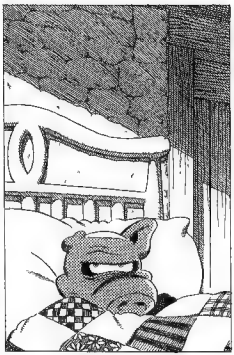


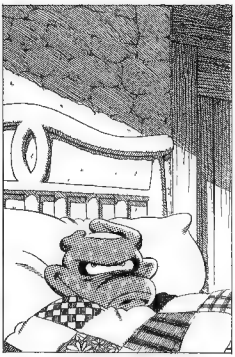
..CERBERUS DECIDED TO GO BACK TO BED.

ONCE CERBERUS WAS BACK IN BED, CERBERUS COULDN'T FALL ASLEEP RIGHT AWAY (BECAUSE HE HAD ONLY BEEN AWAKE FOR) (LIKE) TWO HOURS! SO...
INSTEAD OF COUNTING SHEEP HE TRIED COUNTING "SEAT OF TRUTH" REFERENCES IN THE BOOK OF RICK THAT ROYALLY SCORNED "THE SANCTUARY" IN THE EAR.
RICK 3:37 WAS THE LEADING CONTENDER IN THAT CATEGORY: "AND UPON THE SEAT OF TRUTH SAT RICK WITH HIS BOOK, JUDGING ALL MATTERS AS THEY PERTAINED TO CERBERUS, THE SANCTUARY AND TRUTH."
OR HOW ABOUT RICK 3:47? "HOWSOBEIT THAT RICK SPAKE NOT UNTO CERBERUS OF HIS VISION OF THE LATTER DAYS FOR SUCH WAS IT GIVEN UNTO RICK OF THE SEAT OF TRUTH THAT RICK ONLY SHOULD KNOW THESE THINGS"
CERBERUS COULD TRY TO FIGHT BACK WITH RICK 6:32 "BUT CERBERUS HAVING A PERFECT UNDERSTANDING OF ALL THAT WAS WITHIN THE HEART OF RICK -- EVEN THOSE THINGS HIDDEN FROM RICK HIMSELF SPAKE UNTO RICK SAYING"
(IT WAS JUST LIKE "GIRLYBOY") (CERBERUS THOUGHT) TO KEEP ALL THE SELF-CONTAINED VERSES FOR HIMSELF)
PARDON?
OH! HEH-HEH. "GIRLYBOY"? THAT WAS THE NICKNAME CERBERUS HAD FOR RICK BACK IN THE ORIGINAL SANCTUARY. CERBERUS NEVER CALLED HIM THAT TO HIS FACE OF COURSE, BUT I'LL HEY!
CERBERUS NEVER THOUGHT OF THAT BEFORE!
"GIRLYBOY" HAD DIVIDED INTO THOUSANDS AND THOUSANDS OF..
FERRY TITS?!
NYUK! NYUK! NYUK! NYUK!
AHEM (SORRY)

SO ANYWAY CERBERUS JUST... LAY THERE... GETTING MORE AND MORE STEAMED-- THINKING OF KICK --SOMEWHERE-- HAVING THE LAST LAUGH AT CERBERUS' EXPENSE. JUDGING? CERBERUS
KNOCK KNOCK
WHAT?!
FAIRON MOANED OHH SULKINGLY... BUT THE CHRONISTES HATH LAUNCHED THEIR COUNTERSTRIKES AND MESPUN BOTH PREPARE HIS COUNTER COUNTER STRIKE!
YEAH SO?
ER - WE WERE WONDERETHING IF YOU HADN'T (PERHAPVENTURE) SOME WORDS OF INSTRUCTION FOR THY FAITHFUL CEREBERUS ON THE HORN OF THE EVEN OF BATTLE...
AYE: SHUT UP AND GO AWAY
AT CERBERUS EXPENSE. JUDGING CERBERUS AND THE SANCTUARY SITTING ON HIS STUPID, FAT
KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK
WHAT!
ER - D'YERE ANYPLACE PACIFICALLY YOU'RE WANT US TO GO AWAY TO? (VOCAL CRANKINESS)?
AYE!
ESHNOSOPUR! ON YOUR HANDS AND KNEES.
SITTING ON HIS STUPID, FAT SEAT OF TRUTH. HAH! (THOUGHT CERBERUS). IF ONLY ALL OF THESE... "FERRY TITS"... HAD SEEN GIRLY BOY TWITCHING AND SHUDDERING THAT TIME THAT HE THOUGHT CERBERUS HAD CALLED FORTH THE QUEEN OF ALL

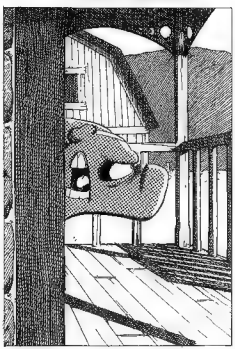




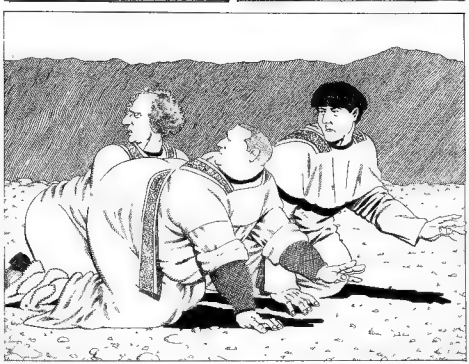


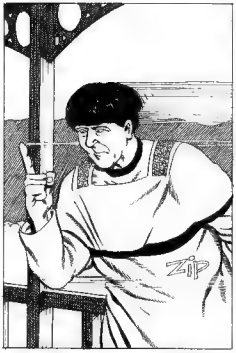
Ye Booke of Cerebvs

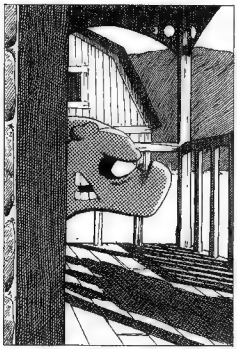
Chapter the Firste



1: And Cerebvs spake vnto the Three Wise Fellowes saying, Hearken vnto Cerebvs. Heare ye Cerebvs' speeche:

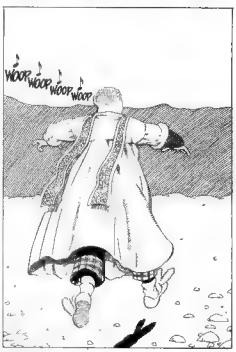


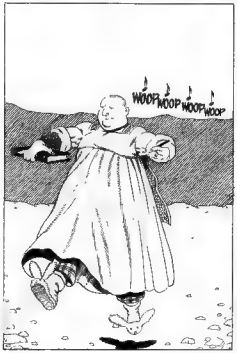




2: Write ye these wordes of Cerebus in a booke

...

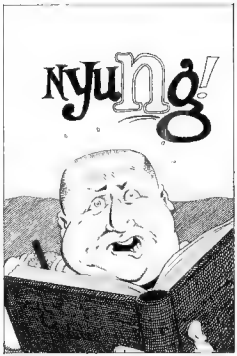


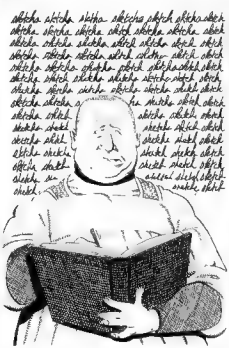


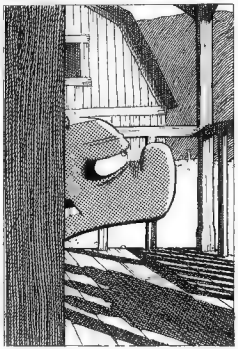
...

which shall be known as Ye Booke of Cerebus:

3: Goe ye foorth to warre with McSpahn and bring ye his messenger vnto Cerebvs after each victorie.







4: And swiftly didst the Three Wise Fellowes hearken unto the wordes of Cerebvs, saddling up their Three Wise Horses and galloping away in pursuit of McSpahn and his valiant bande of "Bosoms of ye Barges".

GALLUMP
GALLUMP
GALLUMP

KLUNK
CHING
THUMP
CLUNK
HIP HOP HIP HOP
CLINK
CLINK
THUNK!
BOUNCE BOUNCE
HIP HOP HIP HOP
CHOP CHOP
HIP HOP HIP HOP
BUMP! BUMP! BUMP!

(continued from front cover...)

I've also just finished reading all of my favourite author's books. Louis L'Amour's last book, a memoir called *Education of a Wandering Man* is one I'd recommend to you. He has good thoughts on education, reading, and writing. You seem to be self-educated much as he was, reading what interests you. At the back of his book is a list of books he read in each of 7 different years, over 700 in all.

Your view of chess (tactical & strategical) in the footnotes of F&V was interesting. I teach chess, so I view it a little differently. I see each piece (all 6) as capable of carrying out tactics. Strategy would be the overall plan, the goal of which may require tactics to achieve successfully. (Huh?).

By the way, are you related to Malcolm Sim? He wrote the chess column in *The Toronto Telegram* for nearly 40 years until he died around 1956. Also by the way, would you have any interest in, and what would you charge, for a sketch on 8 1/2 x 11 paper with Cerebus and a chess set & board that I could reproduce to help publicize a chess tournament (or, to include in the players' tournament booklet)?

I don't follow the monthly, as I mentioned, so I don't know what you've in mind post Cerebus 300. I hope you continue writing, and I look forward to reading more stories from you.

Sincerely,
David Cohen

I sort of figured that was the case with human resource officers (do they really *call themselves that? That's* priceless*!) As with the overwhelming number of girls instead of boys being accepted at universities, they're just going to keep eliminating men and advancing women in all the areas where they've usurped men's jobs until someone makes them stop because they sure aren't going to stop themselves. I wonder how long it's going to take them to figure out that any environment where they take over instantly becomes irrelevant to everyone but themselves? Forever? That's what I think, too.*

Afraid I haven't got time to do any commissioned work, but feel free to use any of the chess images from the Mothers & Daughters *storyline.*

****

Dear Dave,

I'm taking a break from watching all of the maudlin news coverage of the WTC/Pentagon attack to respond to your decidedly-not-maudlin memoriam of one Gene Day.

I have, throughout the years, felt a kindred spirit in you for your love of Mr. Day. Of course, I never knew him personally, so you have a much more spot-on view of him. Nevertheless, he ranks in my pantheon of comic greats. Right up there with you & Ger (at the top; for sheer longevity, if nothing else); Claremont, Byrne, Kirby, (begrudgingly) Stan Lee, Steranko, Adams, and for *MOKF*, Moech.

That last is a purposeful segué to *Master of Kung Fu*. You see, by way of background, I used to *consume* comics. In high school, I routinely bought *every* Marvel title (we're talking late 70's, before my exposure to *Cerebus*) back when to do so cost about five dollars a month. Gradually, I found, read, reacted to, & grew to love *MOKF*.

Just as I entered college, I had found an intelligent comic that wasn't afraid to touch on <u>real</u> emotions, as opposed to the "Oh, my gosh, what will happen to Aunt May if I go into battle once again?" type of Stan Lee emoting. And the artwork was stunning! Imagine! Continuous backgrounds, just like real life! Imagine it!

Dave, the most important thing I want to convey to you is that *MOKF* was the last Marvel stepping stone to the only comic book that I still collect, 20 years later. Of course, that book is *Cerebus*. In fact, just before my good friend, Paul Shaffer (not the band leader, but a swell guy) introduced me to *Cerebus* (at issue #25), the only comic book that I was still collecting was *MOKF*. At least, that's how I remember it. My continuity may be a bit off, but you get the point. One adult comic book led to another; *MOKF* begot *Cerebus*, for me.

So, if for nothing else, God bless Gene Day for introducing me, albeit indirectly, to the small grey one.

Yours beyond 300,
Jeff Seiler

P.S. How come you haven't printed my letter re: your interpretation of Jesus' views on homosexuality? Could it be because of my prediction as to a certain girly-boy? Just curious!

P.P.S. Love the backgrounds, especially the interplay of the Catholic (pontifical) and Jewish (Star of David) symbols to the rear of Cerebus. Not to mention how that forms a sort of "crown of thorns" for Cerebus. It's clear that the "religious nuts" theme will continue for some time to come. Then, of course, knowing how you love your foreshadowing, one can't ignore the blood to come, judging from the mottled shadows on said "pontiff's cap" & "Star of David" in panel one of page 14.

Oops, I've done it again. Gone & got my letter not printed because of figuring things out ahead of time. Silly me!

Well, maybe I'm wrong. Anyway, good job with the Gene Day Memoriam.

Thanks.
Actually, I got a few letters on the "two men in a

bed" reference in Luke's Gospel so I'm not sure which one was yours, Jeff. For the record, I am aware that "two men in a bed" was not as unusual an occurrence among heterosexuals in Jesus' time as it is in our day and age. But, Jesus was talking about Judgement Day and (presumably) was told by God or by Archangel Michael or Archangel Gabriel what he was to say in answer to the question. If it was God who told him directly or through the Archangel Michael or the Archangel Gabriel (or the...unnamed?...Holy Spirit) God certainly knew—and knows—when Judgement Day was—and is—going to take place and—given that my best guess is that two heterosexual men sharing a bed is going to become a whole lot less *common as we go along, therefore—I see it as a reference to homosexuals. Somebody rather snidely told me to check the Dead Sea Scrolls—which I thought was funny, since the Dead Sea Scrolls contain only the Books of the Prophets and the Hagiographa: no New Testament. Someone else (equally snidely) told me to check my Hebrew dictionary for the word "grind" as in "two women grinding together"—which I thought was equally funny since the Gospels were originally written in Aramaic and/or Greek.*

A short digression while I'm "in the vicinity": at the time of their discovery in 1947, the Dead Sea Scrolls predated the "next oldest" copies of the Torah by about 800 years and contained virtually every Book of the Pentateuch, the Prophets, the Hagiographa, several books of Apocrypha as well as some wacky "period cult" pieces from the 1st century CE like "The War Between the Sons of Light and the Sons of Darkness". In contradiction of the—then (and in some quarters still)—widely-held view that the Scriptures had "evolved" in "broken telephone" fashion as they were passed down by oral tradition, each of the Books was word perfect when matched against the modern-day copies of the Torah: every jot and tittle right where it was supposed to be. Let me hear you say, "Amen"!

Oh, all right. Be *that way.]*

Anyway, I thought it only fair to homosexualists to point out Luke 17:34-35 as the only example I found in the Torah, the Gospels and the Koran which might be construed as "gay-friendly". You know, as opposed to ignoring it because it doesn't support my own views. As I told one gay reader in a letter a few years ago, I would be very hesitant about basing my choice of lifestyle on a single reference in one of the Synoptic Gospels. I mean, if I had my own Synoptic druthers, I would be tickled to death to base my own lifestyle on Matthew 5:32 "whosoeuer shall put away his wife, sauing for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery" and 19:9 "Whoseuer shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery." Invariably Christian commentators tell us that what Jesus meant *was "except for the cause of* adultery": *that is, you can put your wife away if she's committed adultery. Well, call me a blind-eyed true believer Scriptural literalist but I have great faith that Jesus, the Archangel Michael, the Archangel Gabriel and/or God all had—and have—a pretty good working knowledge of the difference between fornication—sex with an unmarried individual—and adultery—sex with a married individual. I don't picture Jesus, Michael, Gabriel* or God *saying to himself or Himself when the page proofs for Matthew's Gospel came in: "Oh, darn. That's not what I meant to say." The implications, of course, are staggering—allowing of only two possibilities: you are allowed to put away your wife if she had sex before you were married OR you are allowed to put away your wife because you've decided you'd rather fornicate than have sex with your wife (again and again and again and again). In either case I would certainly find it very convenient to say, "Okay, I got rid of Deni because she had sex with other guys before we met" or "I got rid of Deni because I wanted to have sex with other women." and use Matthew 5:32 and 19:9 as a scriptural basis for fornicating my brains out. As it is, I'm not sure our marriage had any validity as a marriage because it was a civil union: we were married in an Ontario courtroom, not a church. I do believe that the two references I've cited were put in there—specifically—as proof of the basic goodness of Christians (and God-fearing people in general). If people* were *as evil as some...entities...think they are then the last two millennia should've been one big Christian orgy all using Matthew 5:32 to justify unrestricted fornication as a replacement for marriage. Not only has that* not *been the case but, so far as I know, I'm the only reader of the Gospels to spot the legal loophole. Therefore, God wins his Point: with the exception of Dave Sim, people are good. And even Dave Sim isn't all bad since, even though he spotted the loophole, he isn't evil enough to try to use it to justify unrestricted fornication.*

[Another digression before I leave this one alone: Matthew 5:32 and 19:9 are just the sort of thing that really stick in my largely Judaic craw when matched up with their Synoptic counterparts: Mark 10:11 "Whosoeuer shall put away his wife and marry another, committeth adultery against her" and Luke 16:18 "whosoeuer putteth away his wife & marrieth another, committeth adultery." Well, which is it? Is fornication an extenuating circumstance? If so, whose circumstance does it extentuate: the husband's or the wife's? Is adultery a sin against God or a crime against your wife? And if I remarry am I committing adultery against my ex-wife or my second wife? OY VEY! SCRIPTURE IS NOT SUPPOSED TO BE A MULTIPLE CHOICE EXAM! If part of the motivation behind the Synoptic Gospels was to drive Jews crazy, guess what, it works good! What is this? A game show? "One of these references fulfills the Law of Moses regarding putting away your wife by putting a bill of divorcement in her hand as specified in the Fifth Book of the Law. Is it number one?" "I am relating the Word of God as it was imparted to Jesus." "...number two...?" "I am relating the

Word of God as it was imparted to Jesus." "...or number three?" "I am relating the Word of God as it was imparted to Jesus." "You'll find out today on: To Tell the Truth Sort Of!"

Oy gevalt.

For those who prefer not to have this "game show" approach to the legalistic ins and outs of marriage, the best reference work in the scriptures, in my view, is the second Sura of the Koran, "The Cow". For centuries it represented the most enlightened—and thorough—treatment of the subject of marriage and divorce in the scriptures of Judaism, Christianity or Islam. Of course the feminist bulldozer has put an end to all that here in our "Having It All" degraded feminist age which has led to my own personal view:

*Women are just a pain in the ass and not worth all of the trouble they have caused, are causing and will continue to cause in the collective and individual lives of God-fearing Judaic, Christian and Muslim men who continue to allow women to have a role in their lives. God willing, He will take some action in this area against the feminist bulldozer and bring some relief to his followers. Personally, I believe He is taking a "Let All the Poison Lurking In the Mud Hatch Out" (*I, Claudius*) approach to the problem. Since I don't have to put up with one of them in my life, this is fine by me. I'm sorry on behalf of the rest of you blokes, though.]*

****

Dear Dave,

I am writing you in response to your essay "Tangent" as a long time Cerebus reader, two publishee in your letters page (issues 195 and 237), licensed social worker, and a man (as opposed to a male). I would first like to commend you on another excellent issue (265), and for the continuing high quality of your and Gerhard's comic on a month by month basis. Your essays in the back of the book are always a high point for me when they appear and I typically find them well reasoned, enlightening, provoking of personal introspection, and on occasion even wise. "Tangent" was yet another insightful and challenging summation of your opinion which I am thankful you have chosen to share with us. I'm sure I will return to it on many future occasions as I have with other essays of yours in the past. I agreed with a large portion of what you had written in this particular piece, at least a good two thirds of it, but as you have probably guessed I differ with you on a few areas that you addressed. In particular I differ with some of your views on children, discipline, the implication that social workers are a profession that has been co-opted by feminist thought, and your assertion that youth today are somehow more prone to criminal activity than in years past. "What!?" I hear the feminist majority cry, "The social worker isn't complaining about all those assertions Dave made about women, animals, and there being no such thing as child poverty!?" Nope, that's their job to try to rescue those ideas from the hammering you gave them. No such thing as child poverty. I'm with you there.

First a little bit about myself. I'm twenty nine years old, have been practicing social work for five years now professionally, and I consider myself to be an atheist. Sorry, I'm not buying the part about the nerve endings being placed in the butt by a higher power for the purpose of disciplining females and children. I tend toward the explanation that man created the idea of God as a means of coming to terms with his knowledge of his eventual death. Despite the fact that I am so far apart from you on this fundamental belief, I still think that we are reasonably close to one another in regard to our core values. Mine simply happen to be derived from my beliefs about how people should treat one another, which I think are inherent and self evident as part of the natural world instead of being given by divine mandate or design. My particular field within social work has been as a child protection worker for the past four years. Within my profession this job tends to be viewed as the pinnacle of difficulty due to its complexity, the number of systems you must interact with, the hostility encountered when working with these families, and the extent of the problems many of these families present with. In the past four years, I believe I've come to a much better understanding of abuse versus discipline and that I happen to have learned something about today's youth.

Understanding Human Behavior and the Social Environment, (Zastrow & Ashman, 1994.) defines social work as helping people solve their problems more effectively and cope with their situations. Social work is also working with systems both public and private to provide people with the resources and services they need. Society defines for us what problems are considered significant enough to warrant the need for assistance from a social worker with a particular problem. Children's math homework—for instance—society has not seen necessary for special attention from social workers. Child abuse, significant mental health problems, coping with the death of family members, and providing services to the severely handicapped are areas that society has asked for the help of social workers in managing. Social workers are asked to educate, mediate, advocate, coordinate, and evaluate. We are expected to keep our personal biases in check and to serve our clients by helping them manage these problems in their lives in a way that is both effective and ethical. We are also expected to use the most up-to-date theories and research on human behavior to assist us in our work of assisting to solve our clients' problems. This is my profession and what it aspires to do. I do not see it as inherently feminist or in any way to be a voodoo profession. At least no more than a doctor or a teacher. I freely admit that there are social workers corrupted by unsound feminist ideas. I no more argue for every social worker than you would do

for every writer. I believe that the foundation that social work is built upon is solid and that any flaws in it's execution lie with the practitioner and not with the field itself.

Now that I've said a few words about my profession I'd like to discuss discipline and the effectiveness of punishment. You seem to have a pretty clear idea of what constitutes abuse so I won't belabor the issue. Pretty simply under the law in most parts of the US (and I would assume in Canada, too) any kind of physical injuries or bruising resulting from a parent or spouse could constitute child abuse or battery. I'm not entirely against spanking as a form of discipline for young children, however, I believe that its use should be very limited and that there are other more effective ways of teaching appropriate behavior. I would no more advocate the spanking of an adult spouse than I would a business partner. It's not how you treat adults and doing so would only result in resentment. Spanking is a type of punishment. Other types would include being sentenced to prison for a crime or receiving a speeding ticket. This is one of the most studied areas in human behavior and what we have learned is that punishment is not a very effective means of changing behavior. The same text as noted above has this to say about punishment. "Parke (1997) concludes that superficial punishment does have a place in behavior modification programs. However, he cautioned that punishment is a complex process with varied effects. Variables such as timing, intensity, consistency of punishment, and the relationship between the punishing agent and the client directly affect the results of punishment.Æ Punishment tends to be a quick experience, especially with a spanking, which is often forgotten by children. Unintentional injuries happen all-too-frequently when parents are trying to spank a child who is trying to avoid the spanking or get away from a parent. Workers in my office have even witnessed broken bones resulting from a parent trying to grab a child by the arm who was attempting to avoid a spanking. These types of issues are easily avoided through more effective means of discipline such as removal of privileges or using an extinction method such as sending a child to a time-out in a corner with no positive reinforcers. I work with parents who sing the praises of these types of methods once they are taught how to apply them consistently and not allow their child to manipulate their way out of consequences. These parents are truly shocked that their children's behaviors are actually changed by these techniques when physical discipline was not effective.

I'm not sure where you found your statistics that youth crime has increased by 35%. Maybe this is true in Canada, but I don't believe that this is trend in the US. A few weeks back I was reading a very lengthy article in our local paper about youth crimes and how youth have recently been misperceived to be much more violent then in the past in the wake of the number of recent school shootings. The statistics they quoted, and I don't have them in front of me to refer to, stated that youth crimes were down significantly according to the FBI reports and that the current generation of adolescents were spending more hours per day in structured, adult supervised activities than any generation of youth in history. I personally don't place a lot of stock in statistics. I was recently speaking to a father who had been shopping at K-Mart with his teenage daughter. He expressed a great deal of frustration that she had been caught shoplifting by the store, but they would not press charges because the item she stole was below a certain dollar amount. She was made to return the item, but no legal process took place despite the father's request that charges be pressed. This example aside I find in my daily work with children that the majority of them have good values and are not that different from when I (or, I suspect, from when you) was a child. I completely agree with you that children need to be treated as children and not given adult decisions. Furthermore it is their parents' duty to do all that they can to correct their child's behavior when they break the law or demonstrate a lack of understanding of basic moral principles. I am responsible for a number of children who were removed from their parents' care due to physical abuse, sexual abuse, or neglect that may have resulted in harm to the child. Each day I attempt to make decisions that will guide these children who are going through these extremely trying circumstances to take responsibility for their own actions and to learn the morals they will need when they become adults. I hope you take the opportunity to re-examine these issues more carefully and possibly comment on them again for the benefit of your readership.

Sincerely,
Reed W. Tate
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P.S. As we move toward issue 300 (and who knows if I will take the opportunity to write you again before then?) I would like to ask if you would consider a post-issue 300 periodic mailer to fans regarding any projects you or Gerhard may be working on be they comics, novels, essays, plays, or whatever creative avenues you choose to pursue after Cerebus. I would be interested in any future artistic endeavors you may be partaking in and I am not confident that I would be made aware of these projects by the comic book media. Please consider doing this and taking addresses from those who may be interested.

Thanks for a very thoughtful letter. I think there are a number of areas where psychologists, psychiatrists and social workers try to have their cake and eat it too. As an example, in your letter: "Punishment tends to be a quick experience, especially with a spanking, which is often forgotten by children." On the one hand, the voodoo professions try to persuade us that corporal pun-

ishment is this magnified trauma-inducing evil in the life of a child which scars them for life and— on the other hand—as you say here, that it is a quick, forgotten experience. Well, you know, which is it? This is why I recommend measured response: knowing your own strength as a husband and father. Each spank has to be hard enough to produce genuine pain but not hard enough to produce bruising or blood-letting. The point is to make the experience unforgettable and cause an aversion to it that, in turn, causes the wife or child in question to really reconsider embarking on or continuing in courses of action which might lead to a spanking. One good spanking should be sufficient for a six month or year-long period of good behavior if it is administered properly. The thing to do is to educate men in how to spank properly so as to achieve the desired results: relative peace and relative quiet. "Peace and quiet" always being relative terms when you are discussing women and children, as I'm sure you'll agree. Of course, it results in resentment. Resentment is a predominant if not central trait in women and children. Resentful R Us. The point is to guide them into being worthwhile relatively peaceful and relatively quiet resentful—but relatively civilized—beings rather than to allow them to careen about obnoxiously and noisily being resentful—but wholly uncivilized—beings. That is, women and children resent men no matter what men do so the only sensible thing is to take the bull by the horns and teach them to respect you even as they resent you, rather than allow them to patronize you, dismiss you or bypass you while they resent you. The "removal of privileges" thing is fine if you are negotiating with a foreign government and poring over a second draught of a treaty. When a six-year-old is standing in the middle of a food court shrieking at the top of its lungs, Dad screaming louder than the child "No Buffy the Vampire Slayer *tonight, Timmy! Do you hear what Daddy is saying? Timmy?" only makes you look like a feminist or some other low form of human life. "Go stand in the corner." I can see that at home, if delivered with a Voice of Doom that would shake the china in the cabinet. "Time-out" in a corner sounds so squishily feministic I'm having trouble keeping my breakfast down.*

"Each day I attempt to make decisions that will guide these children...to take responsibility for their own actions and to learn the morals they will need when they become adults." I maintain that you are trying to make them adults ahead of time by teaching them to take responsibility for their own actions at an intellectual level far beyond their capacity to understand. You can reason with an adult. You can't reason with a child. You can only discipline a child until it is old enough to reason with. That is, children are not responsible for their own actions. Rightly, their father is. Which is a big reason that discipline both verbal and physical has to start early. A child has to respect his father as the absolute authority over him. In our degraded feminist society, their mother is. When their mother fails because she is too "squishy", you become responsible for their actions. But only in a euphemistic, jargonistic way. If a ten-year-old in your charge has never been properly disciplined either verbally or physically, and he commits a crime: say, the murder of a classmate, the ten-year-old isn't going to jail, the mother isn't going to jail and you sure aren't going to jail. So where is the responsibility? If a ten-year-old in your charge murders a classmate all that would result is a lot of tears, a lot of hugs, a lot of hand-wringing, a lot of meetings with various government bureaucrats, school board officials, heads of your mental health care department, an inquest, a report, a series of recommendations and a little voodoo profession adjectival tweaking of the feminist-jargon-infected clauses and subsections of your mandate and then the sombre invocation of "closure" or some other "officialese" feminist euphemism for "I think we have to stop talking about this now."

I repeat: where is the responsibility?

*Thanks again, for a very thoughtful letter, Reed. I'd ask everyone to write in and be put on a mailing list but, having had just about every moment of my life spoken for for the last quarter century either filling the front of the book or the back of the book, I really think I owe it to myself to at least labour under the delusion that I will be done in March of 2004 and never draw another picture or type another line for the rest of my life. Having a mailing list of people interested in post-*Cerebus *projects would just create a sense of obligation on my part to produce them.*

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Hi, Dave:

It occurred to me that the end of *Going Home* was like the prodigal son parable gone horribly wrong (then again, maybe it's just the skewed worldview of a Catholic upbringing!?). Anyway, I thought you might find the enclosed interesting. Enjoy!

Happy Holidays (again).
Claude

Actually, I never thought of that, but that's just perfect, Claude! The Prodigal Son parable (Luke 15:11-32) doesn't work if you bring the harlot home with you! *Claude was kind enough to send along the catalogue for an exhibit of pictures and engravings* The Prodigal Son Narratives 1480-1980 *mounted by the Yale University Art Gallery and the Davison Art Center of Weslayan University. Thanks, Claude. Much appreciated.*

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